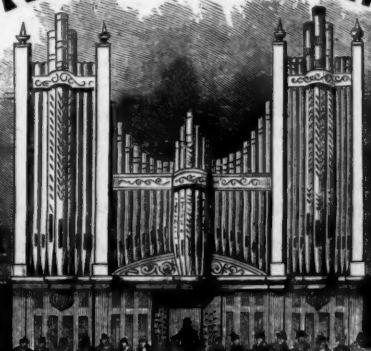


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## Food to one is Poison to another.

APPARENTLY people in Lancashire are very liberal in their views as to musical services, for we hear that at a Methodist chapel at Oldham, a few Sunday evenings ago, instead of the usual service, the "Messiah" was rendered by a choir of 100 voices, assisted by a number of special vocalists. To give up the sermon and prayers, and in place of them to have an oratorio sung, not by the choir only, but assisted by outside vocalists, is indeed a new departure; but, so far as we know, the arrangement was approved by the congregation. On the other hand, we have just been informed upon the best authority, that at a large chapel in London, anthems have recently been introduced into the services, and so objectionable is this to some eight or ten of the congregation, that they have given up all connection with the place and gone to another church. What they would have done had the whole service consisted of nothing but an anthem, as at Oldham, it is impossible to say. Old prejudices die hard, but we could not have believed that there were eight persons in any one congregation who were so bigotted and narrow-minded as to leave a place of worship they had attended for years, because the great majority of their fellow-worshippers wished to sing an anthem.

It is quite impossible to arrange a service to suit the wishes and feelings of every member of a congregation. Tastes differ, and it is therefore

very doubtful if any two persons belonging to the same church would agree as to what was the best form of service. Upon broad principles they might see eye to eye; but when it came to matters of detail, their differences would be discovered. But it is very selfish, and certainly not the act of a Christian man, to take offence and leave the church because his particular ideas are not adopted. It is necessary, therefore, in order to secure peace, for all parties to bear and forbear, and to give and take. In this way some satisfactory arrangement is possible. But if any one declines to give way, even to the slightest degree, in deference to the wishes of others, he is the promoter of discord.

A service should comprise something to suit all tastes. Let us, by all means, have the old hymn sung to the good old-fashioned tune, for the benefit of the elders of the flock. But let us also have the artistically rendered anthem for the benefit of the younger people, who are more educated, musically, than their seniors. The children should have their special hymn, and those who like chanting should not be forgotten. If any are favourable to a liturgical service, such should receive due consideration. In this way a form of service could be prepared that would contain something for each, and if every member of the congregation was blessed with a spirit of forbearance, and recognised the catholicity of the selection, there would be no disagreement nor fault-finding.

We are pleased to know that the Oldham Methodists are advanced enough to shake off old customs and prejudices, and to devote a Sunday evening to strictly religious music. It will be understood, of course, that it is only an occasional arrangement to substitute the singing of an oratorio for the ordinary service; and more than that we are certainly not prepared to advocate. While we urge very strongly the full and proper use of music in the worship of the Almighty, we are not wishful that it should supersede the usual prayers and sermon. At the same time, the action of the Oldham friends in getting out of the old ruts, and making the service more popular, might with advantage be imitated by many congregations.

We are requested to announce that the Secretary of the Nonconformist Choir Union, Mr. T. R. Croger, 114, Wood-street, E.C., will be glad to receive an early reply from the organists who have not yet given a definite answer as to their choirs taking part in the Crystal Palace Festival in June. An early application for the book of music should be made.

We should feel obliged if the organisers of concerts who send us tickets for the purpose of having a report, would send us those tickets as early as possible, that proper arrangements may be made.

An organist of a large and important chapel recently informed us that he receives from the church

authorities very definite instructions as to what stops he is to use and what not to use, and how he is to accompany this and play that, etc. Very little is left to his own discretion, and if he should venture to launch out rather more than suits the taste of the dictators, he is certain to hear of it after service. Such unmusical people would be better served by a barrel-organ, built and regulated specially to meet their tastes. Mechanical music would suit these human machines, and is certainly all that they deserve. It is waste to throw pearls before swine.

ON Tuesday, February 5th, "An Evening with the Congregational Church Hymnal" is to be spent at Christ Church, Enfield, when the editor, the Rev. G. S. Barrett, B.A., is to preside, and make some introductory remarks. Those interested in the book, and especially those congregations who think of adopting a modern hymnal, will do well to attend on this occasion. They will hear what the editor has to say in its favour, and they are certain to hear a very excellent rendering of some selections by the choir of the church, under the able direction of Mr. Fred. Geo. Fitch, the Precentor. The meeting is at 7.30; admission free, and no collection.

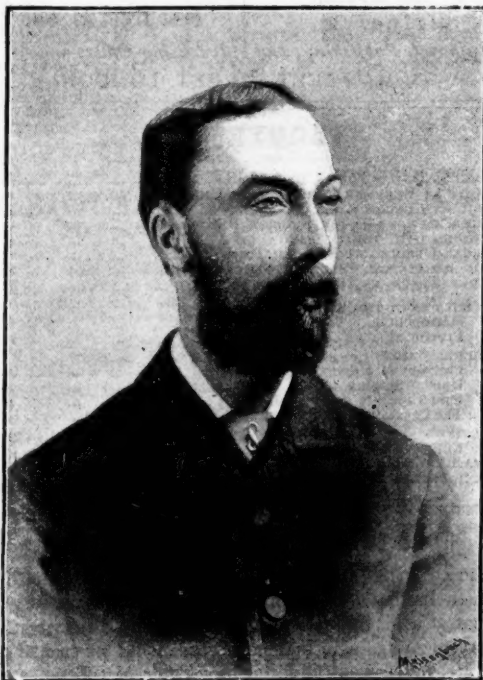
A CORRESPONDENT writes, "The Journal has done much good already in our choir. Several improvements have taken place which were advocated during the year in the Journal."

OUR excellent contemporary the *Tonic Sol-Fa Reporter* is now issued as the *Musical Herald*. When first started, its aim was to promote the Sol-Fa system. That work it has so successfully accomplished that Sol-Faists are now to be found all over the country. It was thought desirable, under these circumstances, to give the publication a more general title, hence the change of name. Under the wise and able editorship of Mr. Spencer Curwen, the *Musical Herald* will no doubt go on and prosper.

SERVICES of Song are popular, and to meet the demand, Mr. J. M. Hutcheson, of 38, Union-street, Greenock, N.B.—an enthusiastic musician—has prepared a Service entitled "Moses," the musical illustrations being taken exclusively from the Congregational Church Hymnal. The numbers of the hymns with the tunes, together with the Scripture selections, are printed on a small sheet for distribution amongst the congregation. Mr. Hutcheson says, "The object of my compiling this service was at once to express in scriptural language in condensed shape, this most beautiful life of Moses, and to impress its lessons by as appropriate a series of hymns, etc., as can be found, without going outside the new Hymnal. To any minister, organist, or choir-master, who may wish to see a copy of the small programme, I shall gladly send one per post if I get

their address. My printer tells me he will be happy to execute all orders for same (*for a month to come*) at 1s. 3d. per 100 copies, or, if quantity is not less than 500 copies, for 1s. per 100, making the alteration of church's name and date required to suit other places."

### Music at Regent's Park Baptist Chapel.



REGENT'S PARK CHAPEL is undoubtedly associated with the name of Dr. Landels in the minds of most of the present generation, for it was during his ministry that it was known as one of the popular Nonconformist churches of the metropolis. For a time the "cause" went down, and prosperity was at a low ebb. Since the advent of the Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A., the present pastor, matters have improved, and on the occasion of our visit on the last Sunday evening of 1888 there was a large, though not crowded congregation. The area of the church is appropriated, but seatholders, we believe, pay what they like; the gallery is entirely free, but a collection is made at each service on behalf of the funds. The congregation in the gallery is very largely made up of young people, apparently drawn chiefly from the higher ranks of the working classes. In the area the more "respectable" part of the congregation seat themselves.

Mr. Meyer is well known as an earnest preacher, but his voice is monotonous, and suggests a want of robustness. He is evidently a very hard worker



and most anxious to get a firm hold of the young people. He certainly has ample opportunity, and if the young people respond to his appeal he will have his hands full of work.

The organist is Mr. J. L. Phillips (whose likeness we give above), a Royal Academy student, an old pupil of Sir Sterndale Bennett's, and altogether a clever and painstaking musician. The organ, a sweet-toned, two-manual instrument, is placed in a separate gallery at the back of the pulpit. The choir sit in a corner of the area—a peculiar, and in every way unsatisfactory arrangement. Being so far away from the organ and organist, the bond of sympathy is broken, and in such a position their efforts are almost useless, as it is utterly impossible for them to lead the congregation. We would very strongly urge the authorities to enlarge the present organ-gallery sufficiently to accommodate a choir of fifty or sixty. If this was done the singing would be greatly improved, and the choir would feel much more interest in their work.

The musical service is very modest, not to say bald, for it consists of four hymns only. Why is it cut down to such narrow limits as this? Why is there no chant? Why are anthems conspicuous by their absence? Certainly not from want of any capability on the part of the choir, for only last month we had the pleasure of reporting a most satisfactory performance of anything but an easy work, "The Redemption," by the Choral Society in connection with the church. Surely there cannot be any serious objection to the introduction of a chant and anthem. While Mr. Meyer, in his sermon, was eloquently and earnestly imploring the young people to make the most and the best of life, it occurred to us what splendid opportunities were being wasted in that very building, of making the most of the musical talents with which many of the congregation are endowed, for the worship of God. We cannot say upon whose shoulders the blame should rest, but we do say most emphatically that with such an efficient organist and capable choir, the musical part of the service ought to be much brighter, and more in accordance with the demands of the times, and altogether much more artistic than it now is.

A church of the size and reputation of Regent's Park should set an example, instead of being twenty years behindhand, which is the case as regards the worship-music. We hope Mr. Meyer and his deacons will seriously take the matter into consideration, and devise means for improving the service of praise.

Upon the occasion of our visit an organ recital of twenty minutes' duration preceded the service, to which the gathering congregation listened attentively. The opening hymn was "Onward, Christian soldiers," sung to the ever-popular "St. Gertrude." Of course everybody knew this, and joined in vigorously. Though the voices were for the most part uncultured, it was pleasant to hear the hearty singing, and to see the evident enjoyment the people had in attacking this martial hymn and tune. The second hymn was "Father

or mercies! God of love!" and the tune Dr. Gauntlett's "St. Fulbert." Again the congregation sang lustily, but without the slightest regard for expression. For instance, it mattered little whether they declared—

"I'll sing the honours of Thy name,  
And spread Thy praise abroad,"

or—

"Then shall I close my eyes in death,"

for the verses were all sung at the top of their voices. Had the choir been near the organ and facing the congregation, very much could have been done to remedy this. Marks of expression, as adopted in all the Hymnals recently published, would also have helped the congregation. We hope in all future editions of the Baptist Hymn-book, these aids to expressive singing will be added.

Before the sermon, "Brief life is here our portion" was announced, and we expected to hear "St. Alphege" (the tune almost invariably sung to it) given out on the organ, but "Ewing" was the tune selected. This did not seem to us to be a very appropriate tune. Moreover, the singing being chiefly unison throughout the building, there was a terrible strain to reach the two F sharps in the sixth line. On this account alone, if for no other reason, it would have been better to have sung the orthodox tune.

The closing hymn, "To-morrow, Lord, is Thine," was sung to "Swabia," but it dragged a good deal. Mr. Meyer seemed to observe this, for he suddenly undertook the duties of leader, his voice at the beginning of each line especially being very audible. There was again a great lack of expression. The last two lines—

"Lest life's young golden beams should die  
In sudden, endless night,"

which should be sung as *pianissimo* as possible, were sung in a most jubilant strain, though Mr. Phillips reduced his organ to the softest stops.

They have an unusual method of giving out the hymns and tunes at this chapel. The number of hymn and tune is announced, and the tune is played over. The numbers are then repeated and two lines or a verse read, after which the first chord is given on the organ, and the people rise. Mr. Phillips makes a distinct stop after the chord is played before commencing to accompanying the hymn. Would it not be better to play the tune over after the hymn had been announced and read, and thus avoid the necessity for playing the chord?

Speaking generally, we may say the singing is congregational and hearty. It, however, wants much more light and shade imported into it to make it effective. It is not artistic, but it is bold and massive.

Our regret is that so much musical ability as is to be found in the church should lie idle on Sundays. "The Redemption" or any work of that kind with full orchestral accompaniments on Wednesday, but on Sunday nothing but four hymns! In other words, good, wholesome, nourishing food is allowed on a week-day, but

on Sunday nothing but starvation fare, and that badly served. At present the baldness of the service and the bad seating arrangements for the choir must surely dishearten the leaders of the psalmody. We hope that this state of things will be quickly altered. The first thing to be done is to provide suitable accommodation for the choir, and then to place the musical arrangements entirely under the control of Mr. Phillips. If these suggestions were adopted we have every reason to believe that the results would be in all respects thoroughly satisfactory to all concerned, and Regent's-park Chapel would then take a good position amongst our metropolitan chapels for its music as well as its preaching.

### Inquiry Column.

As intimated last month, we now devote space for the purpose of enabling our readers to procure information upon subjects that come within the scope of the Journal. Questions sent to us shall appear, and we shall be glad to receive replies, which shall appear the following month. We cannot undertake to answer the questions ourselves, the intention being that this column should be devoted to the interchange of opinion. Questions and replies should reach us not later than the 20th of the month.

#### (1) ANTHEMS AND PART-SONGS.

I have a choir of about twenty who have good voices, but are rather indifferent readers. I want six anthems and six part-songs to prepare for a concert. Can any of your readers suggest some that will be suitable?—A. M. Z.

#### (2) CHOIR TRAINING.

Can any one recommend a good book on this subject?—CHOIRMASTER.

#### (3) VOICE PRODUCTION.

I am a tenor singer, but have not had much teaching. Can some of your readers tell me of a useful book on Voice Production?—TENOR.

#### (4) VOLUNTARIES.

I want some good concluding voluntaries. They must be moderately simple and broad in style, but effective. Would a correspondent suggest some?—AMATEUR.

#### (5) AMERICAN ORGAN OR HARMONIUM?

What is the difference in construction between these two instruments? and which is the better for a small chapel?—RURAL.

#### (6) CHANT BOOK.

We are about to introduce a new chant-book, our present one being a very old one. There are so many chant-books published, and some of our congregation recommend one, and some another. I should be glad to receive any information that will assist us in getting the best book.—T. F.

#### (7) CHOIR MEMBERSHIP.

What are the best tests to give to candidates for choir membership?—APPLICANT.

### The Psalmody of the English Reformation.

By ORLANDO A. MANSFIELD, MUS. BAC. T.C.T., F.C.O.,  
L. MUS. T.C.L.

(Concluded from page 11.)

In 1564 appeared the first Scottish Psalter, in which many tunes were derived from the Genevan. A psalter, harmonised by W. Damon, was issued in 1579, and entitled "The Psalmes of David in English Meter, with Notes of foure Partes, set unto them by Guilielmo Damon, for John Bull, to the use of the Godly Christians for recreating themselves in stede of fond and unseemly Ballades. At London, Printed by John Daye. Cum privilegio." A psalter, published in 1567, and entitled "The First Quinquagene," contained settings of Archbishop Parker's paraphrases. A copy of this work is preserved in the British Museum. Some are of opinion that it was for this work, and not for the psalter of 1563, that Tallis composed his eight hymn-tunes. In 1585 John Cosyn produced a psalter containing sixty psalms, and bearing the inscription, "Musicke of six and five partes, made upon the common tunes used in singing of the Psalmes." A second edition of this work was published in 1591. All the above-mentioned psalters were designed for private use. Damon's first psalter not proving as successful as was anticipated, an improved edition was issued in 1591, bearing this title: "The former Booke of the Musicke of M. William Damon, late one of her Majesties Musitions, containing all the tunes of David's Psalmes, as they are ordinarily sung in the Church: most excellently by him composed into 4 partes. In which sett the Tenor singeth the Church tune. Published for the recreation of such as delight in Musicke by W. Swayne, Gent. Printed by T. Este, the assigne of W. Byrd, 1591." This psalter was divided into two parts, the second part being described as "The second Booke of the Musicke of M. William Damon, containing all the Tunes of David's Psalmes, differing from the former in respect that the highest part singeth the Church tune." In this "Musicke of M. William Damon" we have the first English psalter designed for public worship, and the first containing the melody in the treble.

But the most important English psalter of the sixteenth century was one published in 1592 by Thomas Este, the publisher of Damon's second psalter. The work in question was thus entitled: "The Whole Booke of Psalmes: with their wonted tunes, as they are song in Churches, composed into foure parts: all of which are so placed that foure may sing ech one a severall part in this booke. Wherein the Church Tunes are carefully corrected, and thereunto added other short tunes usually song in London and other places of this Realme. With a table in the end of the booke of such tunes as are newly added, with the number of each Psalm placed to the said tune. Compiled by sondry Authors, who have so laboured heerin that the unskilful, with small practice, may attaine to sing that part which is fittest for their voice. Imprinted at London by Thomas Est, the assigne of William Byrd: dwelling in Aldersgate streete, at the Signe of the Black Horse, and are there

to be sold. 1592." The second and third editions of Este's Psalter appeared in 1594 and 1604 respectively, the latter being, according to the title-page, "printed by Thomas Este for the Companie of Stationers." In all three editions the melody was placed in the tenor. Este's Psalter is supposed to have been *the first published tune-book in which names of places were employed to designate the various tunes*. The contributors to this collection included ten of the best musicians of the day; viz., Richard Allison, Edward Blanks, William Cobbold, Michael Cavendish, John Dowland, Mus. Bac., John Farmer, Giles Farnaby, Mus. Bac., Edmund Hooper, Edward Johnson, Mus. Bac., and George Kirbye. Of these the most noted was John Dowland (1562-1626), the celebrated lutenist, to whom Shakespeare referred in his "Passionate Pilgrim." Among the remaining contributors we may mention George Kirbye, a chorister in and afterwards organist of Westminster Abbey, the composer of the tune Windsor (B. T. B., No. 59); and Giles Farnaby, whose tune St. Thomas (B. T. B., No. 54) was composed for the first edition of Este's Psalter in 1592.

Another psalter of this period was that of John Mundy, Mus. Doc., organist of Eton, and afterwards successor of Merbecke as organist of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. The work was published in 1594, under the title of "Songs and Psalmes, composed into 3, 4, and 5 parts, for the use and delight of such as either love or learne Musicke."

In 1599 Richard Allison, one of the contributors to Este's Psalter, published a psalter of his own, entitled "The Psalmes of David in Meter." In this work the melodies, all harmonised in four parts by Allison himself, were placed in the treble or upper part, and the tunes were provided with accompaniments "to be played upon the lute, orpharion,\* citterne,† or base violl,‡ severally or together." The psalter was inscribed to the Countess of Warwick, and announced "to be solde at his (Allison's) house in the Duke's-place, near Alde-gate." The well-known tune Winchester Old (B. T. B., No. 58) appeared in this collection, which is remarkable as being the *second published English psalter having the melody in the treble, and the first English psalter provided with instrumental accompaniments*.

A work too important to be passed over without notice, but which, owing to the date of its publication, can scarcely be said to constitute a part of the psalmody of the English Reformation, is the Psalter of Thomas Ravenscroft, Mus. Bac. (1582-1685?). This collection, superior to any of the preceding, was published in 1621, under the title of "The Whole Booke of Psalmes: with the Hymnes Evangelicall and Spirituall. Composed into 4 parts by Sundry Authors, with severall Tunes, as have been and are usually sung in England, Scotland, Wales, Germany, Italy, France, and the Netherlands."

In Ravenscroft's Psalter the melody was still assigned to the tenor, and the accompanying harmonies, though in places crude if judged by a modern standard,

would doubtless be effective if sung by a select choir, the congregation taking the melody in unison. One of the tunes from Ravenscroft, a setting of the Old Hundredth by John Dowland, is still sung in Salisbury Cathedral. The second edition of Ravenscroft's Psalter appeared in 1653.

John Playford, in 1671, issued his "Psalms and Hymns in solemn Musick of foure parts on the Common Tunes to the Psalms in Metre: used in Parish Churches," and in 1677 appeared his "Whole Booke of Psalmes," harmonised in three parts. This work passed through twenty editions in less than a century, but like its predecessor, is strictly speaking beyond the scope of this article. With Allison's collection the history of the psalmody of the English Reformation may be said to have its termination.

But the popularity of the old psalm-tunes was of long duration. During the Civil War and the days of the Commonwealth their singing roused the enthusiasm of the invincible Ironsides in the same degree as it had encouraged and sustained the early English Protestants. To these old melodies we are greatly indebted. They were not only the musical exponents of the religious feelings of a large section of the community, but they laid the foundation for that musical heritage peculiar to the English people, the modern hymn-tune. Many attempts have been made to attribute to the extensive employment of these metrical psalters the decadence of musical worship caused by the vortex of dissipation into which English society was plunged after the Restoration. Says one writer, "The rage among the Protestants abroad, and of their most ardent sympathisers in England, for metrical versions of everything sung in Divine worship . . . in some two centuries reduced psalm-singing to a by-word of reproach in most parish churches, and an intolerable infliction to all persons of musical taste." This indictment is not altogether inaccurate, at least, as far as the words of the metrical psalms and the performance of the music set to them is concerned. On the other hand, the corruption of psalm-singing was not so great as that of the music of the Roman Church prior to the Reformation, when secular melodies, associated with profane words, were selected as suitable themes upon which to construct masses for Divine worship. As we have already remarked in other words, had there been no psalm-singing in by-gone days, there would have been no hymn-tune in our own. Notwithstanding, we have no need to hark back to the crudities of the sixteenth century. While as regards Protestant psalmody Germany and France have remained in pretty much the same condition for the last two or three centuries, let us be thankful that we have progressed from the "lugubrious" strains of the old psalters and the vulgar commonplaces which satisfied the past generation, until we have arrived at the hymn tune of to-day, which, spite of all its shortcomings, is the most popular existing representation of really good English Church music. A form tracing its origin back to the Elizabethan age, and still flourishing, in spite of the pernicious influence of the excessive floridness of a bygone day, and the still more demoralising effect of the American plagiarisms of the present, the modern hymn-tune must surely possess

\* Also orphereon, orpheon, or orpharion. A kind of zither played with a plectrum.

† Old name for zither.

‡ Base violl, bass viol, i.e., viola da Gamba, an instrument not altogether unlike the violoncello.



some germ of immortality itself. Let us hope that in its future career it may not become entangled with the yoke of ancient barbarisms or with that of modern sentimentalities. But even should such a disaster occur, there are many to be found who have sufficient confidence to believe that the hymn-tune of the future will be strong enough to ultimately burst its trammels, and prove itself a fitting exponent of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest.

### "Singing with the Understanding."

BY REV. P. W. DARNTON.

I WANT to say a few words about psalmody from the minister's point of view—that is, from the stand-point of the one who has chiefly the moral and spiritual welfare of the congregation under his charge. Others may be much interested in the condition of the sanctuary, or place of meeting; others may care for the financial prosperity of the church; others may bring their knowledge and cultivated taste to bear upon the musical portion of the services; but the minister necessarily thinks most of the inward life of the people, and endeavours, first and chiefly, to cultivate that. Paul, I think, felt this when he used the words at the head of this paper. He meant that he would not allow his religious excitement and enthusiasm to carry him away into the mere utterance of meaningless sounds, but his singing should be intelligent and intelligible, and while inspired by spiritual emotion, should be guided by reason. And this is an example which we need to set before ourselves, for while there is no part of Divine worship better calculated to exalt and purify the soul than singing, there is no part in which thought and care are often so conspicuously absent. To sing with the understanding means to use the mind as well as the voice. Nor does it merely mean to use the mind to direct the voice. The Apostle Paul is certainly not thinking of musical science. However important that may be, that is not what is in his thoughts here. He is thinking of using the voice as the vehicle, the expression of the mind.

Of course it is perfectly natural for those whose profession leads them to the study of the science of music, and for those who have the direction or performance of the musical part of Divine service, to give their chief consideration to the *music* itself. But to the worshipper and those who are responsible for the intelligent devotion of the people it is just as natural to lay chief stress, not upon the music, but upon the thoughts, emotions, and aspirations which the music is intended to express. What we need is to find the point of contact between these two tendencies, and in the union of the two our worship will be perfect.

The point of contact seems to me to be in the consideration that singing, as a part of Divine service, is *musical reading*. This is not only true of the chant; it is just as true of the psalm and the hymn. Until this idea becomes predominant in the minds of organists, and choirs, and congregations, we cannot be said to sing with the understanding. The singer is very apt to put the tune first, to give his chief attention to the proper rendering of the harmonies and cadences of the

music, and when the choir can sing the tune correctly he thinks they have done their part, whereas as a matter of fact they have only taken the first step. They have perfected the vehicle; now they have to make it carry its sacred burden. This tune, which they have learned so well, is now to be used to bear upwards the souls of the whole congregation. It is to express all the variety of emotion which was in the poet as he composed the hymn, and which he intended to become the spiritual possession of those who sang it. The hymn may be written in a kind of monotone; one feeling may be so predominant throughout as to exclude every other. But as a matter of fact, very few hymns are of this nature. In most, especially the favourite modern hymns, there is a great variety of emotional expression. A hymn may modulate into almost every key, from major to minor, or minor to major, of which the human soul is capable. And the tune is to convey, so far as possible, all these varying moods and tones.

If a musician sat down to write music to such a hymn as I have described he would of course vary his melody and harmony according to the thoughts and feelings expressed by the words; but the tune-writer has a humbler task. He can only compose something which possesses a general character, and may, therefore, be used by a skilful singer to partially express the emotion of the hymn, the expression necessarily being left by the composer to the performer. I say 'partially,' because we must confess that though a very high standard of true singing may be reached, after all, hymn-singing is only an imperfect mode of expressing the varying records and emotions of the worshipping soul. We cannot have perfect results with an imperfect instrument.

If any musician should fancy that by giving chief attention to the thought and emotions of the music we put music into a less honourable place, I think he altogether misunderstands the nature of his art. He might as well suppose we despise language because we insist it is of chief value as a vehicle of thought. Music is a form of language, and as humility ennoble and elevates, and never degrades a man, so music, by taking its proper place, and making itself the most gracious and exquisite expression of emotion which man possesses, rises to true nobility and greatness. If, then, singing is musical reading, there must be elocutionary laws for the singer as well as for the reader. A man may possess a very good voice, and yet read very badly, and a choir may sing a *tune* very correctly, and yet sing the *hymn* very badly. To sing a *tune* is one thing, to sing a *hymn* another. It is a far more difficult and nobler art to render into musical speech the poet's soul, to translate the thought and emotion of the words into appropriate harmony, than merely to sing a certain number of chords correctly. The difference between good and bad reading is this: the good reader endeavours to convey, by the intonations and pitch of his voice, by the rate of speed, and even by pauses, something of his author's thought; the bad reader gives no attention to the thought at all, he merely repeats the words. As thought is ever varying, melting, changing, passing into new forms constantly, like summer clouds, the reader has never an easy task.

It ought to be much easier to sing well than to read

well, because music has so much larger a range of tone and note than mere elocution. But the principle is the same in both. The object of the musician, at least in the public worship of God, must be, not merely to charm the ear by correct harmonies, but to convey, as on the wings of musical sound, the emotions of the devout heart and the varying thoughts which are uttered in the hymn.

It is impossible for a choir to do this unless it be acquainted, not only with the tune, but with the hymn for the sake of which the tune is to be sung. The choir-master, or one of the members of the choir, should read the hymn aloud to the choir before they attempt to sing it, and all its varying tones of feeling should be noted. "Phrasing," which, after all, is merely "minding one's stops," is quite as important as "expression." Indeed, careful, thoughtful *rendering* of a hymn is an entirely different process from the careless, noisy singing of a tune five or six times over to words the meaning of which neither choir nor congregation make an effort to understand. The difference between the two things is almost as great as between the sincere prayer of the devout, thoughtful soul, who asks God intelligently and humbly for the very thing he desires, and the empty gabble of paternosters by some ignorant Papist to the accompaniment of the rattle of his beads; and some day we shall all come to acknowledge this.

I have not much space for illustration, but if the Editor can make room for one hymn I can perhaps put the subject more forcibly still. Yesterday I was at a meeting of about twenty intelligent, devout men. The favourite hymn, "Lead, kindly Light," was announced, and this is exactly how they sang it, the punctuation being that of the *singers*, not of the author!—

"Lead, kindly Light. Amid the encircling gloom.

Lead Thou me on!

The night is dark and I. Am far from home.

Lead Thou me on.

Keep Thou my feet. I do not care to see.

The distant scene one step enough for me.

"I was not ever thus. Nor prayed that Thou.

Shouldst lead me on.

I loved to choose and see. My path but now.

Lead Thou me on.

I loved the garish day. And spite of fears.

Pride ruled my will remember not past years.

"So long Thy power hath blest. Me sure it still.

Will lead me on.

O'er moor and fen, o'er crag. And torrent till.

The night is gone.

And with the morn those angel faces smile.

Which I have loved long since and lost awhile."

If any one of those gentlemen had been asked to *read* the poem, he would have done so correctly enough; he would not have made nonsense of the verses. But it seems to be tacitly acknowledged in hymn-singing that provided you get a general idea of what the hymn is about, you need not trouble yourself to *think* as you sing. Make plenty of noise, and you perform an act of worship. But if any one accustomed only to the rough, *unthinking* kind of psalmody which satisfied our fathers could once hear *hymns* sung—sung as a few choirs here and there can

sing them, and as some congregations also have been taught to sing—they could never go back to the old, unintelligent, and undevout methods of the past. The first time I heard *hymns* sung—truly, simply, yet thoughtfully sung—marked a stage in my mental development, I was almost going to say in my religious life.

If choirs could be trained in this habit of "singing with the understanding," the congregation would soon begin to take note of what was being sung, the attention would be arrested and intensified by appropriate expression, and the hymn-singing would be truly "worship."

I am not one of those who think we may offer to God that which costs us nothing, that anything, however crude, or careless, or rough, will be acceptable to Him. Of course sincerity is the chief thing. And the most correct and artistic service will be loathsome to Him if the heart is not in it. But surely sincerity without intelligence is superstition, and if we are unintelligently sincere we shall endeavour so to frame our worship as to make it a somewhat fit offering to Him whose ways and works are perfect.

We shall not offer to Him our mere rubbish, our worst and most useless possessions, but "our gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

### Organ Opening at Kentish Town.

On Thursday, December 27th, a new three-manual organ, built by Messrs. W. Hill and Son, was dedicated by a short service, consisting of a brief prayer, the reading of the 150th Psalm by the pastor (Rev. T. McDougall Mundie), three hymns, and an address by the Rev. Alfred Rowlands, LL.B., of Crouch End, who, taking as his text Psalm lvii. 7, "I will sing and give praise," spoke of the importance of music in Christian worship, pointing out the wonderful extent to which it had been used in all religious movements and revivals, especially from Wesley's time down to our own day. He exhorted those who had musical talent to come forward and help in the praise of God, to whom we should bring the best of everything we possess. Mr. Rowlands evidently thinks with Dr. Parker that "the choir is part and parcel of the whole ministry." There was also a word to those who have no sympathy with music, reminding them that song has often been known to impress where sermons have fallen dead. In conclusion, the preacher expressed satisfaction at the introduction of the "Congregational Church Hymnal." He said, "We have used it at Crouch End for more than twelve months, and as we have become better acquainted with it we have become increasingly attached to it."

At the close of the address Mr. Fountain Meen gave an organ recital. His programme was made up of compositions by J. S. Bach, J. F. Barnett, Beethoven, C. M. Widor, Th. Dubois, Guilman, and A. Berridge.

This selection showed the splendid capabilities of the instrument, and proved the superiority in point of effect of the three over the two-manual organ, especially the "Offertoire" (Barnett), "Larghetto" (Beethoven), and the "Allegro Cantabile" (Widor); this latter charming movement was executed in a manner beautifully artistic and clear. The "Toccata" (Dubois), brilliantly played, was justly popular, and by its lively character was a timely contrast to the more sedate numbers.

Miss Kathleen Grant's singing was very enjoyable.

Her rendering of "With verdure clad" induced the audience to break the silence which had reigned during Mr. Me. . . st pieces.

On Saturday, the 29th, the second recital was given, the organist being Mr. E. Minshall, of the City Temple.

The recital was preceded by a few well-chosen words by the Rev. W. F. Adeney, of Acton.

The programme was selected from Haydn, Hepworth, Kinross, E. Minshall, Giurand, and Ketterer. The number of the evening was Mr. Minshall's "Characteristic Piece," in which the *Voix celeste* was used with great taste and effect. The audience were so demonstrative that Mr. Minshall had to bow his acknowledgments. Messrs. Taylor and Tucker were much appreciated in their vocal solos, Mr. Taylor's "Comfort ye" finding particular favour, and the round, full tone of Mr. Tucker's voice told well in the recitative and air from Haydn's "Creation."

On Thursday, January 3rd, the third recital was given, Mr. E. H. Turpin (Hon. Secretary of the College of Organists) being at the organ.

It was preceded by a short address by the pastor, who addressing himself to would-be critics, who object to the lavish decoration of the house of God while there are starving poor, said he thought there was a danger of much service destroying the spirit of worship in these days, as there was in the days when our Lord met the same objection from His disciples, who, on the occasion of the woman anointing Him with the costly spikenard, asked, "Why this waste?" The spirit of Christ's answer was that worship should predominate.

The programme was selected from the works of G. Morandi, Handel, E. J. Hopkins, J. S. Bach, Grison, Beethoven, Corelli, E. H. Turpin, Spohr, and Mendelssohn. A. B.

## Congregational Psalmody.

### THE MINISTER.

I HOPE I shall be kept from saying anything derogatory to the ministerial office or supposed to have reference to Christian pastors of my immediate acquaintance. I desire to say only what is legitimately warranted by the circumstances of the case, and I trust I may do so without being in the slightest degree offensive or uncharitable. Furthermore, I can honestly affirm that my wish is to uphold rather than to weaken the minister's position in this part of Christian worship. That position, it is well known, is not always what it should be. For this there may be various reasons. The minister may not be what is termed a musical man. He may be conscious of the fact; it may be even more perceptible to others than to himself, that he has no ear for music; or he may have countenanced the false idea that the singing is not in his department; worse still, he may value psalmody as a matter of secondary importance. Or he may have to do with a wayward organist or consequential choir-leader, or a deacon who fancies that he has a special gift for "giving out" hymns. For one or other of these reasons, involving his repose of mind, a minister may relegate the psalmody arrangements to hands other than his own. In my opinion it is a great mistake for him under any circumstances to do so; he ought to be supreme director of this, as of all parts of the worship. Who so fit as he to choose hymns in consonance with his subject? who so capable of reverentially announcing them to his congregation? But his prerogative entails duties which cannot be disregarded without injury to the service of praise.

It is a happy state of things where a minister fully recognises his responsibility in this respect, and *shows it*. It may be taken as a sure sign of the primary requisite—viz., the conviction that congregational praise is one of the nobler forms of Christian worship, not less important than the public prayer which it is his province also to lead. With such conviction of its value he cannot dishonour its duties by a perfunctory discharge of them; and while exalting psalmody for its own sake, as a Divinely appointed means of worshipping God, his regard for it will be strengthened by the remembrance that among our Nonconformist forms of worship it is the only one in which the congregation may audibly unite. In every other part of the service are their tongues silent, or nearly so. Time was when even this liberty was not permitted in Dissenting chapels. Emancipation came, however, and it were well if other changes would follow, so that it might no longer be said of us that we think more of the sermon than we do of the worship. But we thankfully acknowledge that many, perhaps the majority of ministers estimate psalmody at its true worth, and pay every respect to the people's rights in it. At any rate, I know those who do, and it has been my lot to be associated with such, very much to my comfort and happiness. On the other hand, I have frequently been pained by the lamentable indifference of others. I have seen at an anniversary service, while all beside were standing engaged in singing a hymn, a table-pew full of ministers—big, stalwart men—*sitting down and silent*, just as if they were the gods to be sung to, and my heart has sunk within me. Anything more depressing, more hurtful to congregational singing cannot be conceived of, except, perhaps, a practice common to some ministers, which to my mind has even more objectionable features than indifference. I refer to the practice of wantonly mutilating hymns by cutting out some of the verses. Sometimes this is done in a most senseless fashion; in general it is an unjustifiable interference with the people's enjoyment of the service, to say nothing of the injustice done to the hymns. In many cases, no doubt, the practice is entirely a thing of habit. So far as my experience goes, it is not the regular minister of a congregation who is chiefly addicted to it; he, in general, has too great reverence for the completeness of the worship and for the feelings of his people; it is the occasional supplies who are the chief transgressors, notably the students from the colleges, although in their case the practice can hardly have become a habit. A good young man has been sent to preach a sermon. He not unnaturally deems his special ministry the important thing, and is apparently oblivious of the fact that the occasional supply may come and go, but that the worship lives on for ever. Thus forgetting, he will trifle with it and mar it as he pleases. I have witnessed painful instances of this. Some time ago a young man came to supply the church with which I am connected. It was at Christmastide, and the last hymn of the service was "Brightest and best of the sons of the morning." Without the slightest thought of what he was doing he said, "We will sing the first and last verses," which, as I presume most of my readers are aware, are the same word for word. His directions were followed, much to the amusement of the young people, but very much to the discomfort and disfigure-



ment of the worship. It is hardly possible to shorten a hymn without marring its beauty. Only think of dismembering that hymn which no words of mine can fitly describe—

"When I survey the wondrous cross."

Yet it is done sometimes. To take a single verse out of such a hymn is like taking a pearl from a coronet—you cannot take one away without doing injury to the whole. No doubt curtailment seems necessary when time runs short, but is it right that any other part of the service should be so unduly prolonged as to necessitate the praise being hurried through in a slipshod manner? or are we, as Christian people, so much more rigidly punctual to the hand of the clock at the close than at the commencement that we cannot tolerate a minute or two for the proper rendering of a hymn? If so, shame upon us all round.

A minister who duly cares for the interests of congregational psalmody will see that the young people have their place in it. He will remember that they form the major part of his congregation, and that although they cannot be expected now to appreciate as the older people do the ordinary hymns of the sanctuary, yet that they enjoy their own hymns, and that at least one of these hymns should have a place in the service whenever the Sunday-school is present.

B. W. P.

### Music Teachers and Church Music.

A COMMITTEE appointed by the American Music Teachers' National Association to consider the question of Church Music recommend the study and practical improvement of such matters as the following: (1) The elevation of church music, both vocal and instrumental, into a carefully specialised branch of music as an art and a profession—honourable, reverent, and progressive; (2) the teaching of church music as a speciality in music-schools and conservatories; (3) the systematic teaching of music, vocal and theoretical, in theological seminaries; (4) the gathering of monographs by practical church musicians upon their various specialities, particularly in the form of papers for the annual meetings of the Association; (5) the preparation of graded, classified, and critical lists of anthems for ordinary choir use, of church hymnals of all denominations, and of organ pieces for actual church use; (6) the comparison of practical methods in the three departments of choir, congregational, and organ music; (7) the interchange among church musicians of programmes, service-lists, and similar documents; (8) the public rendering at each annual meeting by invited organists and choirs, before church musicians in the Association, of the musical parts of actual church services, both vocal and instrumental, with opportunity for explanation by the director and for criticism by the auditors; (9) the provision at each annual meeting of the Association of a question-box, answers to important questions to be publicly given by the commission.

NIELS GADE, at the time of his being conductor of the opera at Copenhagen, had once to deal with a lady who sang dreadfully out of tune. All the flutes which went with the voice tried their utmost, she would persist in singing flat. Gade, in desperation, stopped and with polite irony observed, "Excuse me, madam, but would you kindly give us your 'A,' in order that we may tune our instruments accordingly."

### Echoes from the Churches.

(Paragraphs for this column should reach us by the 20th of the month.)

#### METROPOLITAN.

BLACKFRIARS.—A very successful sacred concert was given on January 8th, in New Surrey Chapel, under the conductorship of Mr. P. M. Cook. The vocalists were Miss Kate Fusselle, Miss Coyte Turner, Mr. S. Kessell, Mr. W. Stewart, and Mr. W. P. Richard; violinist, Miss Kate Crome; harmonium, Mr. W. Webber. The proceeds were in aid of the building fund.

ENFIELD.—On Friday, Dec. 21st, an organ recital and carol singing took place at Christ Church, Enfield. Mr. E. H. Turpin, Hon. Sec. College of Organists, Dean of Trinity College, London, etc., presided at the organ, and Mr. Bernard Fison, A.C.O., organist of Christ Church, was the accompanist. Mr. Turpin's repertoire consisted of Christmas music, by English, French, German, and Italian composers, and was marked by perfect mastery of the instrument and the skill and delicacy of an accomplished musician. The carols sung by the choir, with the exception of the well-known "Good King Wenceslas," were of more than ordinary beauty and difficulty, and were sung with singular precision and effect. The solo parts in "Good King Wenceslas" were well sustained by Mr. McLennan and Master Edgar Toms. Two of Dr. J. F. Bridge's most beautiful carols, "In sorrow and in want," and "Child Divine," were included. The latter is full of chromatic harmonies, rendering it difficult of satisfactory execution, but it appeared to present no insuperable difficulties. The solo in another beautiful carol, or more properly anthem, "All my heart this night rejoices," was also sustained by Mr. McLennan, who possesses a sweet and clear voice, of medium power. It would be an omission not to mention Handel's chorus "For unto us a Child is born." This well-known but too often indifferently rendered chorus was sung with absolute precision, and the difficult runs usually slurred over with the impression of vague indefiniteness were properly rendered, and the true beauty of the marvellous skill of the composer in the writing of florid counterpoint was brought out. Mr. Fison showed talents of a high order in the accompaniments, which were marked by unflinching precision. It should be added that the words were provided for the audience free of expense. The audience was a fairly large one, though double the number could have been accommodated in the large and handsome church.

FINSBURY PARK.—A grand evening concert was given in the Congregational Church, on January 9th, under the direction of Mr. A. J. Hawkins, the vocalists being Miss Hilda Wilson, Miss Agnes Wilson, Messrs. W. Foxon and H. Lane Wilson. Miss Annie Ward was the violin soloist, and Mr. H. Lane Wilson the solo pianist. Miss Hilda Wilson greatly pleased the audience by her fine singing. The concert was a great success in every respect.

KENTISH TOWN.—Two organ recitals have followed those reported in another column in connection with the opening of the new organ at the Congregational Church. On Thursday evening, Jan. 10th, the fourth organ recital was given in the above building, the organist being Mr. Walter Pettit, and the vocalist Mr. Tremere. The performance was rendered in a very good style, the organ pieces being particularly attractive; the most interesting item, perhaps, being an offertory by Arthur Berridge. The attendance was not so large as it might have been. On Thursday, Jan. 17th, the fifth recital was given, the organist on this occasion being

Mr. Frank Frewer, and the soloist Miss Rea. The organ pieces were very well rendered, as was also the selection from "Messiah" by Miss Rea, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The audience, although appreciative, was very small.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—The service at Abney Congregational Church on Christmas Day was chiefly musical. Besides two carols, an anthem ("O Zion, that bringest good tidings"), Smart's Te Deum in F, and hymns were sung. Mr. E. Burritt Lane, Mus. Bac., the organist of the church, played suitable voluntaries, and Mr. Spensley gave an appropriate address.

WANDSWORTH-ROAD.—By a sale at Priory Congregational Church (Rev. W. J. Holder, pastor), the sum of £53 3s. 1d. was realised, which amount will entirely remove a debt on the organ and piano.

WESTMINSTER.—A Free Sacred Concert was given on the evening of Boxing-day at Westminster Chapel, and was well attended. Many of the poorer neighbours had previously partaken of a substantial tea, provided by the generosity of Mr. C. de Selincourt. The choruses were sung by the choir of the chapel, assisted by other friends, and the solos were taken by Miss de Selincourt, Miss Jessie King, Mr. F. Leeds, Mus. Bac., and Mr. Alex. Tucker, of the City Temple. The organ accompaniments were played by Mr. W. de Selincourt, Mrs. F. Leeds, and Mr. G. H. Ely, B.A., and the concert was under the direction of Mr. Sydney Cross, organist of the chapel. Short addresses were given by Mr. de Selincourt, Mr. Gates, of the Memorial Hall, and Mr. W. Hewitt. Space will not admit of a detailed account of the execution of the music, but a word of special praise is due to Miss Jessie King and Mr. Tucker, for their admirable singing. It may be added that every one present was supplied with a copy of the words sung, and that there was "no collection."

#### PROVINCIAL.

ABERCORN.—At the English Baptist Chapel, despite inclement weather, a largely attended Eisteddfod was held on Christmas Day. The chief choral prize was divided between the Treharris and Abercorn Choirs.

ALFRETON.—A performance of Romberg's "Toy Symphony" in the Town Hall, in aid of the building fund of the Congregational Chapel in that town, realised £8 10s.

BIRMINGHAM.—At the Church of the Messiah, on Christmas morning, a musical work dealing with the life of Christ, written by the organist, Mr. Astley Langston, was performed.

BOURNEMOUTH.—The sacred cantata "The Coming of Immanuel" was given at Lansdowne Church, on Sunday evening, the 30th December. Between the first and second parts an address was given by the pastor, Rev. W. V. Robinson.

BUCKLEY.—The members of the Congregational Church have presented Mr. Joseph Griffiths with a framed address, an oil painting of himself, and a purse of gold, on his retirement after thirty years' service as choir-master, and in recognition of his untiring energy in promoting the interests of the Sunday-school and church. Mr. Wm. Jones presided over an enthusiastic meeting, which welcomed home Mr. Griffiths after a three-months' absence. Mr. Griffiths' son (Mr. J. R. Griffiths) is organist and choir-master of Christ Church, Westminster Bridge-road, of which Rev. Newman Hall is minister.

CHESHAM (BUCKS).—The annual New Year's concert was given in the Lower Baptist Chapel, on Tuesday, January 1st., by the choir of that place of

worship. For more than thirty years concerts of a high-class character have been given, some of the works rendered in recent years being Arne's "Hezekiah," Gaul's "Ruth" and "Holy City," Carter's "Martyrdom of Placida," and Mozart's "First Mass." The programme showed no falling off in quality, selections being given from Handel's "Judas Maccabæus" and "Esther," Jackson's "Deliverance of Israel," Crotch's "Palestine," etc.; other pieces being Pergolesi's "Gloria," S. Bennett's quartette "God is a Spirit," and the solo "I dreamt I was in heaven," from Costa's "Naaman." Mr. W. Ward, who has officiated from the commencement of the concerts, was conductor and pianist, and there was, as usual, a good attendance, the musical element being strongly represented in Chesham.

COVENTRY.—A concert was recently given in West-orchard Chapel by the members of the West-orchard Singing Class, in aid of the Rodhouse Memorial Fund. The first part of the programme, which was well sustained, was miscellaneous. The second part consisted of the cantata "Immanuel," by Dr. William Spark. Miss Matthews (soprano) sang the whole of her parts with great taste, especially the airs "Thou shalt call His name Jesus" and "There were shepherds." Miss Morgan (contralto) effectively sang the two airs allotted to her, and special mention must be made of the duet, "We saw no glory crown His head," which was given by Miss Matthews and Miss Morgan. Mr. H. Cooper was very successful, especially in "Yea, a sword shall pierce," as was also Mr. Trotman in his rendering of "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant." The favourite number in the cantata was the quartette "I delight to do Thy will," given without accompaniment by Miss Matthews, Miss Morgan, Mr. H. Cooper, and Mr. Trotman. The chorus, numbering sixty, sang very effectively. The whole concluded with the chorus "Jesus, my Master, Saviour, King," sung to the well-known "Luther's Hymn." Mr. C. Matthews is to be congratulated on the efficient manner in which he conducted throughout. Mr. Townsend presided at the organ, and played the accompaniments.

EAST BERGHOLT.—The Christmas cantata "The Coming of Immanuel" was given in the Congregational Church on Sunday evening, December 23rd. The spacious building, which was very prettily decorated for the occasion, was closely packed with an appreciative audience. The solos "Lovely Eden," "Come, Saviour, come," "Coming, yes, coming," "Hosannah," and "Tell it o'er the far blue mountains" were rendered with splendid effect by Mrs. Lawson. The "Chime Solo" and "Glory to God" were nicely sung by Miss Hynard, while the choruses were well sustained by the choir. Miss S. Rose ably presided at the harmonium and piano. After the cantata a suitable sermon was preached by the pastor, the Rev. R. E. Rose, from Matt. i. 23, "Immanuel, God with us," the congregation joining heartily in the closing hymn, "Songs of praise the angels sang."

EDINBURGH.—A handsome organ has been presented to St. Columba's Free Church, and was used for the first time on Sunday, January 6th. This is the first instance of an Edinburgh congregation availing itself of the resolution of the Assembly in 1883 permitting the use of instrumental music.—There was a special musical service in Buccleuch E. U. Church on Christmas Sunday, when, besides the usual hymns and paraphrases, suitable anthems and carols were sung and voluntaries played. The order of service (a copy of which has been sent us) is beautifully got up, being printed in gold on blue card, and ornamented with a photograph of an engraving.

FONBRIDGE.—A new organ has been opened in the

Wesleyan Chapel, and the building has been renovated and decorated. At the opening services the sum of £33 was collected.

**GALASHIELS.**—A new organ has been placed in the Free Church, of which Rev. W. Matheson is pastor. The instrument, with the necessary alterations, has cost upwards of £350.

**HINDELEY.**—At the Baptist Chapel, on a recent Sunday afternoon, the choir and an amateur orchestra rendered "The Captivity of Babylon," in the presence of a large congregation. The collections amounted to £8, in aid of a new organ and galleries for the chapel.

**HORNSEA.**—A Christmas musical service was given on Sunday afternoon, December 23rd, in the Congregational Church, by the choir, assisted by friends. The attendance was good, the congregation nearly filling the church. The Rev. D. T. Evans, M.A., presided. The service opened with the well-known hymn, "Hark! the glad sound," which was taken up with spirit. This was followed by prayer, and the anthem "Arise, shine" (Dr. Elvey). Mr. Gaskell gave the recitatives "Comfort ye" and "Every valley," from the "Messiah," and did his part well. "Angels from the realms of glory" was sung to Hopkins's tune. Farmer's "In the fields, with their flocks abiding," was well rendered. The choir chanted suitable passages of Scripture to Smart's chant in D, followed by the well-known anthem "Let us now go" (Hopkins). The children's hymn was "Once in David's royal city," which they thoroughly enjoyed and sang well. Miss Haller gave "Rejoice greatly," from the "Messiah," remarkably well. After a carol, Vincent's anthem "There were shepherds" was sung, the soprano solo being well sung by Miss Burn. The service concluded with "Hark! the herald angels." Mr. Clark Morrison accompanied on the organ, and was assisted by Mr. W. J. Lamb and Mr. T. B. Holmes, Jun. (violin). We must not omit to mention the "Pastoral Symphony," played during the collection by Mr. Morrison and Mr. T. B. Holmes, Jun., which was much appreciated.

**HOLT, WILTS.**—Mr. E. C. Beaven, choirmaster of the Congregational Church, has been presented by the friends of the church and schools with a silver tea-service in morocco case, and an illuminated address.

**HYDE.**—On Sunday evening, December 23rd, the annual Christmas choral service took place in Union-street Congregational Church, and was attended by a crowded congregation. The pastor, the Rev. H. J. Just, delivered an appropriate address. The opening anthem was "O come, let us worship and bow down" (Mendelssohn), the solo part being taken by Mr. A. Booth. The remainder of the items were from Handel's "Messiah," and included the recitative "Thus saith the Lord of hosts," by Mr. E. Berry; chorus, "And He shall purify;" recitative, "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive," and air, "O thou that tellest," Mrs. Pickford; recitative, "For behold, darkness shall cover," and the air, "The people that walked in darkness," Mr. G. May; chorus, "For unto us a Child is born;" air, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion," Miss Mason; recitative, "Then shall the eyes of the blind," and air, "He shall feed His flock," Miss Arstall; air, "Come unto Him," Miss E. Thornley; chorus, "Lift up your heads." The singing throughout was very good indeed, and a word of praise is due to the organist and choirmaster, Mr. M. Clough. At the morning service the anthem "O Zion, that bringest" (Stainer), and "And the glory" (Handel) were well rendered. The usual service was held in the afternoon, in the school, when there was a good attendance. Suitable hymns were sung by the scholars. The following music was gone through by the school and

chapel choirs: Choruses, "And the glory," "Glory to God," "Hallelujah" (Handel); solo, "How beautiful" (Handel), Miss Barlow; recitatives, "There were shepherds," "And lo! the angel," "And the angel," "And suddenly" (Handel), Miss E. Thornley. Mr. S. P. Thornley accompanied on the piano, and Mr. W. B. Pickford and Mr. Clough officiated at the organ. The collections for the day (which were for the musical expenses fund) amounted to over £13.

**LEICESTER.**—A musical service was held in Gallowtree-gate Congregational Chapel, on a recent Sunday evening, when the augmented choir rendered portions of the "Messiah" to a large congregation. The pastor (Rev. F. H. Stead) delivered a short address, and at the close a collection was made on behalf of the poor of the district.

**LLANRWST.**—The rendering of Dr. Roots' sacred cantata, "Belshazzar's Feast," by a choir of eighty voices and several excellent artistes, on Thursday, December 20th, will long be remembered by the people of Llanrwst and neighbourhood. The artistes were as follows: Madame Minnie Jones, Miss Owen Jones, Rev. E. James Evans, Mr. Wilfred Jones, R.A.M., Mr. R. Hugh Jones, and Masters José Lloyd and Allen Williams. Madame Minnie Jones, as "Queen," sang remarkably well, the rendering of the part, "For then would I fly away and be at rest," deserving of special note. Miss Owen Jones was also very successful. Rev. E. James Evans sang with taste and feeling, and Mr. Wilfred Jones was in fine voice, his enunciation being very distinct. Mr. R. Hugh Jones ably sustained his part, and Master José Lloyd and Allen Williams also sang well. The accompanists, Mrs. J. W. Griffiths and Miss C. Hugh Jones, are deserving of special praise. A silver-mounted baton was presented to the leader, Rev. J. Allen Jones, by the Parish and St. Mary's Choirs, on his leaving Llanrwst for St. Asaph.

**NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—The handsome new organ which has been erected in Jesmond Baptist Church was opened on Thursday evening, January 3rd. The instrument is built by Messrs. Lewis and Co., Lim., of London, from a specification by Dr. Rea, of Newcastle, and consists of two manuals, CC to G, 56 notes; great organ, open diapason, 8 ft.; Lieblich gedacht, 8 ft.; salicional, 8 ft.; octave, 4 ft.; flute harmonique, 4 ft.; swell organ, Geigen principal, 8 ft.; rohr flöte, 8 ft.; viola de gamba, 8 ft.; voix celeste, 8 ft.; geigen principal, 4 ft.; horn, 8 ft.; oboe, 8 ft.; pedal organ, sub. bass, 16 ft.; flute bass, 8 ft. Couplers, swell to great, swell to pedals, great to pedals. The instrument has been presented to the church by Mrs. Potts. It was opened by Mr. J. M. Preston, and a concert of sacred music was rendered by the united choirs of the Jesmond Baptist and the Jesmond Wesleyan Churches, conducted by Mr. J. W. Gibson, the solos being sung by Mrs. G. H. Storey, soprano; Mr. T. H. Armstrong, tenor; and Mr. Wm. Lyall, bass. There was a large audience, and a collection was taken in aid of the choir funds. An address was delivered by the Rev. J. T. Forbes, M.A. Mr. John A. Rowell has been appointed organist of this church.

**NEWPORT (MON.).**—On Christmas Day a special musical service was held at Commercial-street Baptist Church, in aid of the "Children's Ward." Selections from the "Messiah" were given by the choir, which was largely augmented for the occasion. The soloists were Mrs. Fred. Davies, Miss G. Smith, and Mr. Reynolds. The chorus, under the direction of Mr. E. Jenkins, choirmaster of the church, sang well on the whole, but showed signs of insufficient rehearsal. Mr. C. Blomfield Bumstead, organist of the church, rendered the accompaniments in a thoroughly artistic manner.



NEWPORT (MON.).—At Victoria-road Congregational Church, on Tuesday, January 15th, a grand organ recital was given by Mr. Alfred J. Eyre, of the Crystal Palace. There was a large audience attracted thither by the reputation of the organist, as well as by the fame of the vocalist for the occasion, Miss Alice Gomes. Mr. Eyre's performance upon the fine three-manual organ was a rare musical treat, and every piece was well received, especially the fantasia on Christmas carols, which was extempore. Miss Gomes rendered four pieces in an exceedingly effective manner; but the *morceaux par excellence* was "Home, sweet home," which is recognised as her speciality. As an encore Miss Gomes sang "Ruth," by Gounod.

ROTHLEY.—A service of song, "Father, come home," was recently performed on a Sunday evening, in the General Baptist Chapel.

SHEFFIELD.—At the annual social gathering of the Queen-street Congregational Church, Rev. C. Chambers presiding, Mr. Henry Coward, who has been for twenty-five years a member of the choir, and for eleven years choirmaster, and has been compelled to resign by increasing engagements, was presented with a handsome gold hunting-watch, and Mrs. Coward with a Singer sewing-machine.

STROUD.—An organ recital and sacred concert, arranged by Mr. John Jacob, brought a large audience to Ebley Chapel on Monday, January 14th. The organist was Mr. Henry Rogers, of Christ Church, Cheltenham. His programme was of a varied character, and his playing gave much pleasure to his auditors. The organ items alternated with oratorio solos. Miss Edith Perkins sang "He shall feed His flock," Miss Lewis "But the Lord is mindful," and Mr. S. Jacob "Be thou faithful unto death." Mr. J. Jacob took part in the quartette "Glory to Thee, my God." The audience joined in a hymn printed in the programme. The proceeds of the concert were for the choir and incidental funds.

TEIGNMOUTH.—The Christmas season has been marked at the Congregational Church by suitable music. For the first time, carols were sung in the place of hymns, selection being made from the series published by Novello. The choir also sang the Magnificat (Bunnett); "Arise, shine" (Elvey), and Mendelssohn's Christmas Hymn. The organist, Miss Creedy, has trained a second choir from children in the Sunday school. These can be used when the ordinary choir is absent in the holiday season, etc. They occupied the choir stalls on Christmas morning, and sang very well. On January 1st the choir gave a seasonable entertainment in the school-room, the result of which was that about 250 poor persons were invited to a substantial free tea a few days afterwards, when part of the programme was repeated for their enjoyment.

TROWBRIDGE.—A new organ has been opened in the Baptist Chapel at Southwick, near Trowbridge, the gift of Mr. Henry Pickard, of London.

TREORKY.—An Eisteddfod was held on Christmas Day, at Noddfa Baptist Chapel. Five choirs competed for a prize of £40 for the best rendition of "Worthy is the Lamb." It was awarded to the Porth Choir.

WILBARSTON.—At the evening service, on Sunday, January 6th, in the Congregational Chapel, a service of song, "Eva," was given by the choir, assisted by friends.

WITHINGTON.—On Sunday evening, December 23rd after a slightly shortened service, the choir of the Congregational Church gave Dr. Spark's sacred cantata "Immanuel." The words have been compiled by the Rev. Dr. Eustace Condor, of Leeds, and treat of the

childhood of Christ. The music is throughout melodious. The soloists were Mrs. Workman (soprano), Mrs. Murray (contralto), Mr. Neill (tenor), and Mr. Agard (bass). Perhaps the gem of the cantata is the quartette "I delight to do Thy will," which on this occasion was sung as a chorus. The hymns include the popular tunes "St. Peter" and "Adeste Fideles;" there is also an excellent original tune written for the words, "It came upon the midnight clear." The choral numbers were particularly effective, and were given with marked precision, the whole concluding with the chorus (in which the congregation joined), "Jesus, my Master, Saviour, King," sung to the well-known tune "Luther's Hymn." Mr. J. K. Dearden, the hon. organist and choirmaster, together with his choir, are to be congratulated on the very effective rendering of the whole work. There was a large congregation.

## Correspondence.

(We shall be glad to receive communications from any of our readers on questions likely to be of general interest.)

### PHRASING OF HYMNS.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—This is an important matter, and should receive very careful attention at the hands of every choirmaster and organist. The example your correspondent gives, "Lead, kindly Light," to "Sandon," is a fair specimen of the difficulty of fitting tunes to hymns. Dykes's tune "Lux Benigna" is better adapted to the hymn, but probably "A. F." has found, as many others have done, that it is anything but a good congregational tune, and therefore he prefers the simpler and less elaborate tune "Sandon."

My experience is that if some of the notes are cut short, so as to make a distinct break, this is the best way to give the hymn a satisfactory rendering. For instance, in the verse "A. F." quoted—

"So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still  
Will lead me on  
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till  
The night is gone,  
And with the morn those angel faces smile  
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."

I should cut quite short the notes sung to the words printed in *italics*, and play the rest of the tune *legato*.

Occasionally the melody of a tune is slightly altered for certain verses in order to suit the words. I find, however, that it is a very difficult thing to get a congregation to sing such tunes correctly. The alterations are so little that they are unobserved. It would be much better to set an entirely new tune to these peculiar verses. There would then be no more difficulty than in changing chants, which is, of course, frequently done.—Yours truly, R. F. H.

[J. B. G. also replies much to the same effect.—Ed. N. M. J.]

### UNISON SINGING.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—Unison singing is often run down, especially congregational unison singing. Too much of it, no doubt, is monotonous, but I question whether our choir-singing would not be more effective in leading if we had more of it. All the voices singing the melody impress it upon the congregation much more than if the tune was sung in parts. My rule, therefore, is for

the choir to sing the first verse, and generally another—usually the third, or fourth—of every hymn in unison, where it is at all suitable. I find that hymns so sung invariably go with a good swing, and are heartily taken up by the congregation.

I know many people have a prejudice against unison singing—why, I cannot say, for many of our church musicians have achieved their greatest successes in writing for unison singing. Smart's *Te Deum* in F., Garrett's service, and Sullivan's arrangement of "St. Ann" to "The Son of God goes forth to war" are all examples of the most effective introduction of unison singing.

I do not advocate congregational unison singing; there is too much of that. I would rather encourage the people to learn their parts, that they may sing in four-part harmony. The most effective and useful choir singing, however, I believe to be unison singing.—  
Yours truly, M. A. S.

#### PAID CONCERTS AND PARISH RATES.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—Your excellent monthly supplies a long-felt want. This year its usefulness will be further extended by the proposed interchange of experience on matters of common interest.

With your permission, I would suggest the early consideration of the question of admission, by payment, to sacred concerts, organ recitals, or lectures at our places of worship. Chapels and school-rooms are exempt from taxation—from a strictly legal aspect—if no charge be made to any service or meeting of any kind held therein. On the other hand, I have frequently obtained seats at churches, or practically so, by the purchase of books of the words or programmes, the understanding being that there was no free admission.

Further, if no charge can be legally made, how is the law observed at our Cathedral Festivals, where the ordinary concert-room arrangements are invariably insisted upon, programmes, words, and collections figuring as "extras"?

I have understood that even in the case of a claim for poor rates, etc., this can be successfully resisted, on application to the Commissioners, if the place be not let to a third party, the hire appearing in that case to be of the nature of a *rent*, and not purely and simply for the benefit of the church itself. Some definite information on this question will be of great service to our country churches in particular. Here ecclesiasticism powerfully influences the officials, and the overseers seem always "on the pounce" to increase our troubles, often serious enough at the best of times.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully, R. U. S.

#### THE CRYSTAL PALACE FESTIVAL.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—It has occurred to me that the Nonconformist Choir Union Festival at the Crystal Palace on June 1st next might be the means of largely increasing our church choirs. There are many musical persons who would be only too glad to take part on this interesting occasion, and have the half-holiday outing, considering the expense will be simply one shilling each—the cost of the music to be performed. If an announcement was made from the pulpit one or two Sundays, giving an invitation to such to join the choir, probably many competent singers would respond; and having once joined, the majority would almost certainly remain permanent members. I believe this bait, if judiciously used, would attract many efficient musical fish to our choir nets. I commend the suggestion to my brethren.  
Yours, A. FISHER.

#### Reviews.

*Immanuel.* A Cantata, by Dr. W. Spark. (John Heywood, Deansgate, Manchester; and 11, Paternoster-buildings, London.) The band parts are now published, at 5s. the set, so the work can be performed as intended by the composer. We understand the second part of "Immanuel" will shortly be published. It is a complete oratorio in itself, and occupies about eighty minutes in performance. The first part contained twenty-five numbers; the second comprises thirty. In each there are solos for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass; but choral pieces (chiefly for mixed voices) prevail, and in the second part, where the disciples continually follow their Master, they declaim choruses for male voices only. All the words have been compiled by the Rev. Dr. Conder, in accordance with the composer's wishes and suggestions, and they are such as may be used by every Christian denomination.

*Sacred Two-part Songs.* (The Sunday School Union, 56, Old Bailey, E.C.) Price 2d. each. Three numbers are before us, viz., "I heard the voice of Jesus say," "Rock of Ages," and "Jesu, Lover of my soul," all composed by Edmund Rogers. We are glad to see the Sunday School Union publishing such compositions as these. They are exceedingly good, and will be found very useful either for service or in the school.

"Behold, I show you a mystery." (Novello and Co., Berners-street, W.) 4d. *Rock of Ages.* (Weekes and Co., 14, Hanover-street, Regent-street, W.) 3d. Both by George Rayleigh Vicars. To choirmasters wanting a good Easter anthem we can strongly recommend the first of these two anthems. It is exceedingly effective and not difficult. Frequent changes of time and key to suit the words, add much to the interest of the composition. The second anthem is a pleasing setting of the well-known hymn.

*Lux Benigna.* Being the History of Orange-street Chapel. By Richard W. Free, M.A. (W. B. Whittingham and Co., 91, Gracechurch Street.) 7s. 6d. A very interesting history, which Mr. Free, the present minister of the chapel, has written. The book contains some information about church music in years gone by. For instance, we read that in Dr. Watts's day congregational singing was almost unknown, and even where practised the hymns were "drawn out to such an extent as to disgrace the music, and put the congregation quite out of breath." The clerk led the singing, and the people followed at such intervals as suited individual taste.

#### To Correspondents.

F. C.—No. You cannot do that.

AMATEUR.—That is the duty of the minister.

NOVICE.—Look through Novello's Catalogue of Organ Music.

CHOIRMASTER.—The dispute is unfortunate, but it is not your fault, so far as we can judge. Have patience and treat all parties respectfully and with dignity. You will then find the cloud will blow over.

The following are thanked for their letters:—J. J. (Stroud), G. H. L. (Poplar), A. A. (Birmingham), C. T. (Manchester), S. A. (Chatham), T. B. Glasgow, A. R. (Louth), W. M. (Wandsworth), F. D. (Peterborough), S. E. (Stoke Newington).

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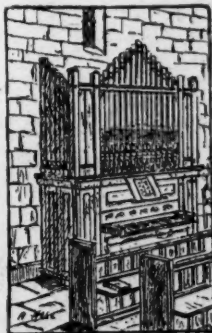
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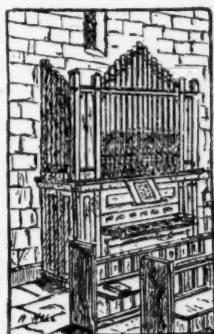
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